DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 145 551 EA 010 017

AUTHOR Stefonek, Tom
TITLE Cooperative Educational Service Agencies: The CESA Coordinators' Perspective. Information Series Volume 6, Number 2. Bulletin No. 7229.
INSTITUTION Wisconsin State Dept. of Public Instruction, Madison. Div. for Management and Planning Services.
PUB DATE Dec 76
NOTE 23p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Attitudes; Elementary Secondary Education; *Intermediate Administrative Units; Questionnaires; *Regional Cooperation; School Districts; State School District Relationship; *State Surveys
IDENTIFIERS *Cooperative Educational Service Agencies; *Wisconsin

ABSTRACT

This booklet summarizes results of a study on the role and activities of Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs) in Wisconsin. CESAs are regional voluntary educational service agencies established in 1965 to serve local Wisconsin school districts. Data for the study were gathered through interviews with the 19 CESA coordinators during the summer of 1976. Each coordinator was asked to respond to ten questions that sought to determine what CESAs have done since 1965, what they are now doing, and where they are headed in the future. The booklet presents each of these questions in turn, summarizing the coordinators' comments and responses to each. (JG)

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COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCIES: THE CESA COORDINATORS' PERSPECTIVE

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Published By

Division for Management and Planning Services
Archie A. Buchmiller, Ph.D., Administrator
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Information Series
Volume 6, Number 2
December 1976

Bulletin No. 7229

EA 010 017

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Introduction

In 1965 the state of Wisconsin implemented a new concept in intermediate education units — the Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs). Recognizing the obsolescence of the county superintendencies, the state legislature established the CESAs "under sub-chapter II of chapter 39, 1973 stats., . . to serve educational needs in all areas of Wisconsin and as a convenience for school districts in cooperatively providing to teachers, students, school boards, administrators and others, special educational services including, without limitation because of enumeration, such programs as research, special student classes, data collection, processing, and dissemination, in-service programs and liaison between the state and local school districts." (116.01 Laws of Wisconsin)

The CESAs were to be totally voluntary service agencies; they were, and are, without taxing authority and, through interpretation of the statutes, have been denied the right to own real property. Each of the nineteen regional agencies was allocated $29,000 in 1965 to employ a coordinator (administrator), establish an office, and begin to make their way in the educational system. During 1966-67 the agencies provided $2,707,223 in total services to local school districts. During the 1975-76 school year, the CESAs provided $31,216,913 in services to local districts.

This study is an attempt to describe what the CESAs have done, what they are now doing, and some opinions as to where the agencies are headed during their second decade of service to Wisconsin students and local school districts, as perceived by the nineteen CESA Coordinators during the summer of 1976.

Study Participants

Sincere thanks is extended to the CESA Coordinators for their participation in this study. On many occasions special efforts were required to schedule interviews and coordinate travel to various sections of the state. On every occasion, the Coordinators extended full cooperation and facilitated the completion of the work in every way possible.

CESA	*Location*	*Coordinator*
1	Ashland	Woodrow J. Sizer
2	Minocqua	Gerald A. Eyler
3	Gillett	Ludwig A. Petersen
4	Cumberland	William McDougall
5	Elmwood	William L. Terrill
6	Chippewa Falls	Henry G. Anderson
7	Stevens Point	Henry Phillip
8	Appleton	Kenneth Poppy
9	Green Bay	John F. David
10	Plymouth	Ervin W. Stankevitz
11	La Crosse	Roland Solberg
12	Portage	Roy Durst
13	Waupun	Dwayne Schmaltz
14	Fennimore	Melvin Bollom
15	Madison	Glenn T. Thompson
16	Waukesha	Royal K. Tice
17	Janesville	Donald Upson
18	Burlington	Dale Jensen
19	Milwaukee	Richard G. Manske*

*Deceased

Description of the Study Procedures

This descriptive study of the CESAs was proposed in a letter sent to all CESA Coordinators by the DPI Bureau of Planning and Evaluation in May 1976. A list of eight interview questions was shared with each coordinator and comments, suggestions and additions were invited. After several rounds of correspondence regarding the questions to be used and the inclusion of four questions suggested by coordinators, the final list of ten items was submitted to each coordinator on May 27, 1976. It was explained in the same correspondence that a personal interview would be scheduled with each coordinator to discuss the survey questions in detail. The interviews began on June 7, 1976 and concluded on August 23, 1976. With one exception, all interviews were held in the CESA offices. Interviews ranged in length from 55 minutes to 125 minutes. Extensive notes were taken during each interview on a form developed for that purpose.

Survey Questions

The following questions were developed through the participation of DPI staff and the CESA Coordinators and served as the basis for the interviews:

1. What do you consider to be the areas of greatest success or achievement for the CESAs since 1965?
2. In which areas do you feel the CESAs have experienced the most difficulty since 1965 (service areas as well as administrative/management aspects of CESA operation)?
3. In what areas do you believe the CESAs will make the most progress and/or the greatest contribution during the next five years?
4. Could you indicate three to five specific achievements of *this CESA* which you feel are particularly noteworthy or important?
5. Are there any changes regarding the legislated role or function of the CESAs which you feel should be made?
6. Are there any changes regarding CESA relationships with local school districts or the DPI that you would suggest or recommend?
7. If you feel the public and/or professional understanding and utilization of the CESAs is less than it should be, what specific recommendations do you have for improvement?
8. Do you favor the development of a common financial accounting and reporting system for the CESAs?
9. Do you favor the development of common CESA procedures, policies, forms, etc. in such legally related areas as employee contracts, LEA service contracts, insurance coverage, etc.
10. Would you favor differential funding for the CESAs based on such factors as:
    a. the number of cooperative programs provided?
    b. total dollar volume of services provided?
    c. achievement of specific goals and objectives set by the CESA?
    d. the number of students and teachers in the CESA?

During the first several interviews, several additional areas of discussion developed which were considered significant enough to add to the list shown above. These items related to the topics of:

1. Agency School Committee (A.S.C.) functions.
2. Formal evaluation of the CESAs.
3. Regional (CESA) placement of DPI staff.

These items are included in the analyses of responses which follows.

Responses

It should be noted that in open-ended interview situations respondents tend to discuss a variety of answers and usually do not indicate these in order of priority. It is also true that any individual respondent does not think of all possible responses that might be given. It is possible for example for two people to give different responses yet be in basic agreement upon the content of both statements because they were in no way mutually exclusive. In the following pages, an attempt will be made to provide responses in formats which are appropriate to the individual interview questions. In addition to the frequency counts which will generally be provided, additional comments received regarding the item will be noted. Frequently, these comments represented the viewpoint of only one or two coordinators, but because of their potential for further discussion or their deviance from majority viewpoints, they are included for the reader's information.

Question 1: What do you consider to be the areas of *greatest* success or achievement for the CESAs since 1965?

It should be noted that this question asked for the most important contributions of the CESAs and was not intended to elicit responses regarding the total range of programs and services offered by the agencies. Coordinators were asked to respond from a statewide, CESA-system viewpoint, not from the context of their particular agency. Respondents usually provided three to five responses to this item.

- The provision of special education (handicapped children) services was cited by fourteen Coordinators (73%) as being among the most important accomplishments of the agencies. It was frequently noted that since passage of Chapter 89, now part of Chapter 115 of the Wisconsin Statutes, CESAs have become increasingly involved in all aspects of special education programming, administration, and staffing. Respondents indicated that special education is the type of service area in which CESAs can operate effectively because of the economy of scale which exists when low incidence disabilities are served on a regional basis. Coordinators frequently commented that handicapped children, especially in small districts, are routinely

receiving vital services from a variety of specialized personnel which would not have been available ten years ago.

- Thirteen Coordinators (68%) felt that the interaction of district administrators through regularly scheduled Professional Advisory Committee (P.A.C.) meetings was an important contribution of the CESA system. While it was readily recognized that such communication is not directly reflected in dollar volume or number of personnel or services provided, there was strong feeling that coordination, information sharing, and a climate of inter-district cooperation have all increased significantly because of P.A.C. activities.

- Ten Coordinators (53%) stated that one of the most important areas of success has been the administration and coordination of federal educational programs. Services in this area have included proposal development, project planning, staffing, fiscal management, evaluation, and reporting. Federal programs such as ESEA I and ESEA III were often mentioned as being particularly appropriate for multi-district involvement through the CESA structure.

- Cooperative bidding and purchasing were cited by seven Coordinators (37%) as an area of considerable success on a statewide basis. It was also generally thought that there have been a variety of experiences with multi-district purchasing and that the concept and practice have not been without some problems, frustrations, and set-backs. Several factors were cited for these complications; however, in spite of them there was general agreement that CESA-wide or multi-CESA purchasing has considerable potential and will at some point be an important dollar saving service for LEAs throughout Wisconsin.

- Three additional service areas were each noted by six Coordinators (32%) as important CESA contributions, i.e., inservice programs for teachers, administrators and school board members; the provision of specialized personnel in pupil services areas; and programming and personnel assistance in instructional media centers and A-V technical services.

- Six respondents (32%) indicated that the development of trust in the whole concept of cooperative multi-district programs and

activities has been a valuable contribution of the CESAs, especially in view of some of the earlier concerns.

- The only other area cited by more than one respondent was that of CESA computer services, both for administrative and instructional purposes, which was mentioned three times (16%).

COORDINATOR COMMENTS

The following observations were made regarding question 1:

- One of the real contributions of the CESAs has been a better organized, coordinated effort to serve pupils who have special educational needs. Underachievers, low socio-economic students, handicapped children, disadvantaged pupils, and vocationally weak students have been receiving resources and services that were generally not available on an individual district basis in years past.

- CESAs have made possible the piloting of new ideas in programs and services on a low-risk, multi-district basis. If an idea succeeds, many districts can benefit; if the venture fails no one district has been hurt very much because of shared resources and risks in a pilot, experimental effort.

- CESAs have made possible a more organized and sustained legislative effort and influence.

- CESAs have begun to engage in field research relevant to LEAs.

- CESAs should not be lulled into a sense of accomplishment through the increase of intangible benefits such as those arising from the P.A.C. meetings. CESAs are in existence to provide tangible, documentable services and it is by this measure they will be evaluated, not by the indirect benefits that accrue.

Question 2: In which areas do you feel the CESAs have experienced the most difficulty since 1965 (service areas as well as administrative/ management aspects of CESA operation)?

Of the responses received, only a small percentage were directly related to service areas or programmatic considerations. The overwhelming majority

were related to administrative and/or managerial problems and difficulties, as the following analysis indicates.

- Seventeen Coordinators (89%) indicated that one of the most serious and pervasive problems faced by the CESAs has been, and continues to be, the inadequate level of state aid received for basic agency support. Respondents systematically stated that the $38,300 maximum administrative support provided by the state is inadequate to cover basic operating costs of the CESA such as the coordinators' salary, secretarial services, facilities rental, and other related administrative costs which have increased significantly as the volume and range of CESA services have grown in the past decade. This topic is discussed in greater detail in the analysis of responses to question 10.

- In retrospect, eight Coordinators (42%) felt that one of the most serious problems faced during the past decade was overcoming LEA concerns and suspicions regarding the role of the new intermediate units. These respondents generally felt that the previous role of the county superintendencies, coupled with concern about a possible new downward extension of state authority and supervision through the CESAs, caused a reluctance on the part of local districts to support and participate in the CESA concept. In a number of agencies it was felt that a period of years was needed to convince and demonstrate to LEA personnel that the CESAs were totally voluntary in nature and that cooperative efforts were to be based upon *local* needs and desires, not upon mandates from the state level.

- Five Coordinators (26%) stressed that the lack of "seed money" to initiate new programs and services without requiring LEA financial support was a problem for the agencies. Respondents felt that many new potential services could be piloted on an experimental basis at a reasonable cost if some modest amount of state funding were available for such purposes. Question 10 provides additional information related to this concept.

- Each of the following were identified as problem areas for the CESAs by three Coordinators (16%):

  - The continuing struggle to get Board of Control members and

local superintendents in their Professional Advisory Committee role to think regionally rather than judging the value of CESA services and activities solely in terms of their individual school district. Respondents did indicate considerable progress in this area, but also felt that the concept of regional services and needs had to be continually stressed to keep a broader perspective alive.

- The lack of personnel specifically trained to work in the CESA setting, and the amount of staff turn-over and lack of employment security associated with the CESAs.

- The annual difficulty of getting firm LEA commitments regarding participation in CESA services and programs. Coordinators are well aware of why such committments are difficult to make at the LEA level but this understanding does not reduce their administrative problems in formulating annual CESA plans.

- District reorganization functions of the Agency School Committee which have become identified with the CESAs by many people. These activities have served as an obstacle to the participation of some LEAs because of the threatening role of the agencies as perceived by persons involved in reorganization issues and emotions.

In direct program/service areas, only five responses were received and these were divided among three areas.

- Two Coordinators (10%) cited problems associated with cooperative bidding and purchasing; two Coordinators (10%) discussed CESA problems in increasing and/or coordinating special education services due to the presence of County Handicapped Children's Education Boards (CHCEB's); and one Coordinator (5%) indicated a problem in initiating and maintaining regional media center services.

COORDINATOR COMMENTS

- The vulnerability and uncertainity of the CESAs from a legal viewpoint is becoming a greater concern. The agencies are getting

more involved in personnel matters related to contracts, negotiations, unionization, benefits of various kinds, and related areas, but do not have resources to pay legal expenses unless funds are contributed by LEAs. Even the basic question of which agency, the local district of the CESA, is the actual employer has a variety of legal and financial implications which remain unresolved.

- Consideration should be given to changing the title of the CESA administrator from "Coordinator" to something that denotes the highest administrative position in the agency. People who are not familiar with the CESA structure confuse the Coordinator with many of the program coordinators employed by the agencies and can't tell by title who the chief administrator is.

- The legislative restriction upon CESA ownership of real property should be reconsidered in view of the current facilities needs of the agencies: the large amounts of money being spent for rent; and the growth record of the CESAs during the past decade.

Question 3: In what areas do you believe the CESAs will make the most progress and/or the greatest contributions during the next five years?

It should be noted that Coordinators were asked to predict new or expanded service areas and that responses should not be interpreted to mean that other current services and activities will be discontinued or reduced in scope or scale.

- Twelve Coordinators (63%) indicated that special education services, i.e. handicapped children services, will be an area of increased CESA involvement. The effects of Chapter 89 (now part of Chapter 115 of the Wisconsin statutes) plus the impact of P.L. 94-142 from the federal level will encourage local districts to utilize the CESA administrative structure and the CESA pupil base to provide high cost services over a large geographic area, especially in low incidence disability areas.

- In-service education (i.e., staff development) in a variety of forms for many types of educational personnel was viewed as an area of increased activity in the future by seven Coordinators (37%). Groups receiving service would include teachers, specialized

professional supportive staff, ancillary personnel, school board members, and administrative staff.

- Based on past experience the respondents indicated in-service education on a multi-district basis is an appropriate activity for the agencies because it is possible to obtain sufficient resources to sponsor workshops and related activities involving outside consultants at a cost which few districts could pay individually, but which is reasonable due to the economy of scale which results from the CESA-wide approach.

- Six respondents (32%) indicated that instructional television (ITV) would be an area of expanded service and activity for the CESAs in the next five years. The same number felt that services related to gifted and talented student programs would be an area of increased activity for the agencies as more districts become aware of and strive to meet the needs of these students.

- Five Coordinators (26%) believed that the CESAs are going to begin to add more special area consultants to their staffs. These specialists in a variety of curricular areas as well as administrative/management areas (e.g., legal services, fiscal management) would enable small districts to utilize specialists for general program development and support in the same way that personnel are now shared in special education programs.

- Other areas mentioned as new service possibilities included educational R & D (four respondents, 21%) and greater provision of vocational education personnel, e.g. LVECs (four respondents, 21%).

COORDINATOR COMMENTS

Several individual respondents suggested new service areas for the CESAs which are indicated below:

- Environment education program and facilities development

- Pupil assessment in local districts

- Employment clearinghouse for LEAs in CESA

- Youth work experience program development and administration

- Computer assisted instruction

- Student exchange programs and magnet schools on an interdistrict basis.

Question 4: Could you indicate three to five specific achievements of this CESA which you feel are particularly noteworthy or important?

This item provided the Coordinators an opportunity to identify and discuss services in their agency which they judged to be of particular importance out of the many services offered.

- Eleven Coordinators (58%) identified services to LEAs in the area of special (handicapped) education as being one of the most important services provided by the CESA.

- Staff development services and activities of all types were considered among the most noteworthy services by ten Coordinators (53%).

- The administration and management of ESEA I cooperative programs, including migrant student programs, was cited as an important contribution by nine Coordinators (47%).

- Cooperative purchasing and the development and operation of IMC/Media/SEIMC centers and services were each noted as very important services by seven Coordinators (36%).

- The only other service area cited by more than four respondents was the administration/implementation of ESEA III exemplary/innovative projects which was noted by six Coordinators (32%).

- Other service areas mentioned by four or fewer coordinators included instructional television (4), vocational education/LVEC's (4), data processing (3), specialized pupil personnel services (3), CMI (2), delivery systems to LEAs (2), and driver education (2).

Question 5: Are there any changes regarding the legislated role or function of the CESA which you feel should be made?

A response to this item was difficult for many coordinators because of mixed feelings about the desirability of having CESA functions mandated by state legislation. Fifteen respondents (79%) felt some functions might well be mandated because of the ability of CESAs to provide services with the economy of scale advantage that a regional pupil/staff base makes possible. They were generally reluctant however to take a strong advocate position regarding such change unless careful study of all proposals would be made and the changes could be achieved without destroying the positive, cooperative realtionship with LEAs that has enabled a wide variety of services to be provided on a totally voluntary basis. If, the coordinators stressed, mandated mission were to be established for the CESAs, then several possibilities exist based on a decade of experience.

- Fourteen respondents (74%) felt that special education (handicapped children) services were one of the most logical and reasonable functions of the agencies. The relatively low incidence of such disabilities, the need for specialized staff, and federal and state program considerations and requirements were cited as reasons for many LEAs to accept a regional service concept.

- Eight Coordinators (42%) felt the CESAs should provide regional media center services and materials. The costs of duplication of materials, equipment, and personnel were reasons given supporting the concept of regional centers that could serve districts throughout a CESA or perhaps even a multi-CESA area.

- Three coordinators (16%) felt that staff in-service/professional development activities would be a possibility as a mandated role of the CESA's, and a similar number (3) felt that perhaps LEA data processing services should be mandated as a CESA function.

In non-service areas, there were several suggestions for revised legislation:

- Four respondents (21%) felt the CESAs should be allowed to own real property to avoid excessive rental costs now being experienced in some agencies.

- Three Coordinators (16%) felt the coordinators title should be changed to better describe the top administrative position. Various program coordinators on the staff cannot be easily distinguished

from the CESA Coordinator, the respondents indicated, because of similar titles.

- Three respondents (16%) felt that the legal role of the CESAs as an employer and/or agent must be clarified to provide greater legal protection and certainly in personnel-related areas.

COORDINATOR COMMENTS

- Even though the majority of coordinators felt there were some services that could reasonably be provided on a regional basis under legislative mandate, there was great concern that this not be done in a manner that would negate the positive LEA/CESA relationship that has been evolving since 1965. Coordinators felt that much of what might or could be mandated is already developing on a voluntary basis and that the basic philosophy underlying the CESA concept should not be violated because of fundamental changes it would bring in LEA/CESA relationships.

- Four Coordinators (21%) opposed any movement toward legally mandated roles or missions for the CESAs. They generally felt that the long-range strength of the agencies was based on the lack of such prescription and that a movement in this direction would only serve to encourage more mandates and more supervisory functions and the effect would be negative over a period of years.

Question 6: Are there any changes regarding CESA relationships with local school districts or the DPI that you would suggest or recommend?

LOCAL DISTRICTS

- Sixteen Coordinators (84%) indicated that the administrative/governance/advisory process and structure that currently exists, i.e. CESA Coordinator, Board of Control, and Professional Advisory Council, is an effective and efficient mechanism for agency operation. These respondents felt no changes should be made in the existing relationships or functions.

- Three respondents (16%), while not advocating basic changes, indicated that the respective roles of the Board of Control

(governance/policy formultaion) and the Professional Advisory Committee (Advisory) are often not as distinct and separate as intended. In practice, this means that the P.A.C. sometimes does not recognize their role as advisory. The Board of Control conversely sometime fails to recognize its legitimate role in governance and policy areas and tends to accept the professional educational opinions and experiences of the P.A.C. without critically examining them from a regional governing body's perspective. None of the respondents considered this a critical or insurmountable problem nor did they propose changes because of it, but they felt it enough of a reality to mention and discuss it during the interviews.

- CESA Board of Control members sometimes have difficulty in shifting their thinking from a local board member's perspective to that of a member of a governing body for a regional service agency serving many school districts. Sometimes their views of the CESA role and services are heavily influenced by the opinions and attitudes of their local district superintendent, rather than being formulated independently in consideration of what is best for a number of districts within a large geographic area.

- The P.A.C. should be expanded to be more broadly representative of other professional educators in the local districts. Without the input and involvement of principals, teachers, specialized student personnel staff and others, the P.A.C. tends to view everything from a management/administrative viewpoint only. (It should be noted that many CESAs interact regularly in a scheduled manner with other LEA personnel. While the several coordinators making this point were aware of such activities, they also mentioned that "opening up" the advisory process in theip agencies was not a popular idea among superintendents.)

- Local board members serving on the Board of Control tend to be more negative today, more representative of special interest groups, and more "single issue" oriented than in earlier years of CESA operation. This may be more indicative of what is happening at the local board level, rather than any particular attitude toward CESAs.

DPI RELATIONSHIPS

- None of the respondents indicated the CESA/DPI relationship is

negative or bad in nature, although some critical comments were given which are noted below. Seven Coordinators (37%) volunteered that in fact the relationship is very good and expressed positive feelings about it.

- Six respondents (31%) expressed the belief that the DPI could use the CESAs more frequently and more effectively for LEA communication and dissemination purposes but that such usage should be with the knowledge of the Coordinator so he is as fully informed as the LEA or CESA personnel being contacted.

- Four Coordinators (21%) suggested that bi-monthly or semi-annual meetings of the Coordinators be held with the state superintendent to provide an opportunity for information to be exchanged, policies and procedures to be discussed, and existing or potential problems and issues to be considered.

COORDINATOR COMMENTS

- CESAs should be used by the DPI to initiate pilot/experimental programs as a matter of departmental policy and practice.

- Some DPI staff members are insensitive to the needs, problems, and role of the CESAs and seem unable to recognize their unique situation as intermediate service agencies.

- DPI personnel should not attempt to play the role of spokesman to the legislature or others, for CESA coordinators and Boards of Control. The CESAs can and should represent their own positions and viewpoints.

- DPI support of the CESAs, especially in matters of policy decisions and discretionary funding usage, has been minimal and the DPI has been slow to recognize and accept the agencies as an educational delivery system. A DPI policy regarding the CESAs is needed.

- The CESA "big brother" threat to LEAs which was evident in some areas ten years ago still lingers beneath the surface and any state activities which threaten LEAs and in which CESAs are viewed as a willing partner will result in a quick resurfacing of old concerns.

Question 7: *If you feel the public and/or professional understanding* and utilization of the CESAs is less than it should be, what specific recommendations do you have for improvement?

Several major viewpoints were found regarding the level of public and professional visibility/understanding the CESAs should strive for.

- All respondents agreed that the CESAs are generally not well known nor understood by the public and very frequently not even by professionals, other than administrators and some board members, usually those who have served or are currently on a Board of Control.

- Eleven Coordinators (58%), while in agreement with the statement above, did not feel that this constituted a negative or undesirable situation. These respondents felt that those who should know about the agencies (e.g., superintendents and local board members) do understand what the CESAs are doing and can do and that it would be an unnecessary expenditure of time, effort, and dollars to attempt to inform everyone, especially the general public, about the agencies when such knowledge would serve little worthwhile purpose. Most of these respondents also expressed the opinion that CESAs must be careful not to get into a competitive situation with school districts for public approval and exposure but must be content to be low profile, service-oriented organizations with limited identity if they are to do their job well in working with LEAs.

COORDINATOR COMMENTS

- Teacher training institutions still have a job to do in informing professional staff of the CESA role and structure.

- LEA administrators often do not give credit to CESAs when such credit is due, even in communicating with their local boards and communities.

- CESAs cause some of their "low-profile" status themselves by encouraging LEAs to take the credit for CESA efforts.

- Some activities that could increase awareness:

  - monthly articles in WASDA, WASB, and DPI newsletters

- distribution of Board of Control and P.A.C. agendas and minutes to every local school board member
- displays in local businesses, professional conferences and conventions regarding CESA programs
- monthly CESA news release regarding activities and services
- in-service presentations to each K-12 faculty each year

Question 8: Do you favor the development of a common financial accounting and reporting system for the CESAs?

- Twelve Coordinators (63%) favored the development of an improved financial accounting and reporting system for the agencies. While recognizing that commonality exists to some degree at the present time because of DPI and CPA standard reporting practices, these coordinators also felt there is great variation among the CESAs that make comparisons and CESA system-wide information very difficult or impossible to obtain. Such variations, it appears, exist most frequently in the area of CESA administrative funds and their sources and usage. While supporting more standardized practices, the respondents also noted the need for as much flexibility as possible and the realization that CESAs are not local school districts and have some unique characteristics and needs related to financial systems and procedures that an improved system should incorporate.
- Seven respondents (37%) felt that DPI, CPAs, and data processing systems have brought or are bringing adequate uniformity to the CESA financial scene and that additional efforts might only reduce current flexibility.

Question 9: Do you favor common CESA policies, procedures, and forms in the areas of employee contracts, LEA service contracts, and insurance programs?

- Fourteen Coordinators (74%) opposed standardization of policies, procedures, and forms in the areas indicated above. They felt it would be appropriate for samples, models, and prototypes to be

developed, perhaps through a combined DPI/CESA effort, and made available for voluntary use or modification by the CESAs but were not supportive of efforts to standardize these administrative/management aspects of agency operation. The reason most cited for opposing such efforts was that the nineteen CESAs are different in many ways and are also unlike LEAs in many respects and efforts to impose uniform practices and policies would create unnecessary problems and difficulties in agency operation.

- Five respondents (27%) felt that work is needed in the areas indicated to bring greater uniformity and orderliness to the statewide CESA system. While these coordinators also noted the need for flexibility where possible, and the extensive participation of coordinators in any developmental work, they held a different viewpoint than the coordinators described above and felt it was very desirable that something be done to improve the existing situation. Legal, financial, and personnel considerations were cited as some reasons for action.

Question 10: Do you favor differential funding for the CESAs based on: a) number of programs provided, b) dollar volume of services, c) achievement of goals and objectives, d) student and teacher populations?

- The concept of differential funding for the CESAs, particularly if based upon any of the factors suggested in the question, was rejected by fourteen Coordinators (74%). Most cited problems of definition and measurement, and various inequities which would result if such factors were used to provide greater or lesser amounts of funds to the agencies. This group of coordinators generally felt that a reasonable level of state support was a more simple and equitable solution than to develop a complicated and potentially unfair system of differential funding.

- Five respondents (26%) had more positive feelings about differential funding but felt careful study and consideration of various factors would be needed to develop a workable and equitable formula. The number of students and teachers in the area served was the one variable that most of these respondents appeared to think acceptable, although problems with this approach were noted also.

COORDINATOR COMMENTS

- If differential CESA funding is to be made a state policy, it should probably be funding that is provided above a guaranteed common level which all CESAs would receive and should be awarded on the basis of formal applications, perhaps on a competitive basis, to support innovative or exemplary program development.

- Differential funding, if provided, should be related to "cost of CESA administrative operation" factors. This would mean that all agencies would be provided with sufficient funds to cover necessary minimal personnel, office, and related expenses so that the same basic result would occur in each agency even though the cost might be $45,000 in one region and $60,000 in another.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

The Agency School Committee (A.S.C.)

Fifteen Coordinators (79%) felt that school district organization/reorganization activities can best be handled through the existing structure of the Agency School Committee. While recognizing the problems of having the coordinator associated with the A.S.C., as well as the Board of Control in an indirect manner, these respondents felt there was no more effective and efficient way to deal with these difficult problems than through the A.S.C. structure and process. The present system keeps the process close to the citizens most affected by district boundary decisions even though C.E.S.A. becomes identified as the reorganization agency.

- Four Coordinators (21%) did not share this viewpoint. They felt the CESAs suffered in terms of their service role because of the stigma attached by A.S.C. activities. They also felt the A.S.C. function was a "financial freeloader" which was detrimental to the CESAs.

Regionalized DPI Consultative Services

Fifteen Coordinators (79%) favored the placement of DPI program consultants/specialists, on a temporary basis, in the CESAs. They felt this would result in more concentrated assistance to a reasonable number of school districts over a sustained period of time and that changes and benefits were more likely to occur than

this approach under the current method of operation. The respondents also noted, however, that this arrangement would not be possible in most program and curricular areas because of the "one position per speciality" situation which exists in the DPI. They also recognized that it is highly unlikely that additional personnel will be added in the foreseeable future to allow regional assignments to be made. Most of the respondents indicated that if such assignments were made they would have to be non-supervisory and non-administrative in nature and that operating guidelines would be essential to avoid problems.

- Four respondents (21%) felt that placement of DPI personnel, even on a temporary or limited time basis, was not in the best interests of the CESAs and would probably cause problems for the agencies either with DPI, LEAs, or possibly both. In any case, they did not want to be in the middle of such difficulties.

C.E.S.A. Evaluation

The subject of more systematic evaluation of the CESAs elicited three types of responses.

- Eleven Coordinators (58%) favored individual CESA evaluation, i.e., basically an agency self evaluation by committees composed of teachers, principals, superintendents, local board members, citizens at large, and/or others. These respondents felt that such an evaluation model or process was the most reasonable one because it would allow judgments to be made in terms of CESA goals, objectives, services, and expectations. In the absence of state mandates and expectations it was viewed as unfair and inappropriate for external experts to pass judgment on any individual agency, or to try to measure and compare the nineteen agencies in some competitive manner.

- Five Coordinators (26%) felt that a statewide CESA evaluation model could be developed and implemented, probably with input and participation by W.A.S.D.A., W.A.S.B., D.P.I. and other appropriate organizations and agencies. While such a model would not attempt to compare the CESAs it would provide a common evaluation design which would be appropriate for all agencies regardless of the unique aspects of their organization or services.

- Three respondents (16%) felt that the CESAs undergo constant

evaluation by the Board of Control, the P.A.C., and local district personnel and there is no need to impose another layer of work upon them. These coordinators stressed that no organization is more accountable, nor more vigorously evaluated, than the CESAs and the process by which that is done is at work continuously.

2000-F74997-77